

D.C., N.Y. Say Expected Increase In Anti-Terror Funding Isn't Enough

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Washington and [New York](#) are both likely to get a boost in key anti-terrorism grants from the [Department of Homeland Security](#) this year, although the two cities will still receive far less than they have in some other years, officials said yesterday.

That news prompted concern among leaders in both cities yesterday that Homeland Security may be continuing to limit anti-terrorism funds for metropolitan centers bearing the highest risk of attack so it can provide more aid to midsize cities. Such a policy drew outrage last summer when the department slashed grants to New York and Washington by 40 percent.

The department declined to discuss its plans for its urban area grants, but the national capital region has been recommended for about \$56 million, a senior Washington area official said yesterday. Although that figure is \$10 million more than last year, it is \$21 million less than the area received in 2005 and 40 percent of what was requested this year. The official spoke on the condition of anonymity because the figures are preliminary.

Rep. Peter T. King (R-N.Y.) said [New York City](#) has been told to expect to receive \$134 million, 8 percent more than last year but \$73 million less than in 2005.

Both totals could change before a Homeland Security Department announcement on the grants, which is expected later this month, several officials said.

King, the ranking Republican on the House Homeland Security Committee, said Homeland Security officials "still just don't get it." "New York is by far the number one terrorist target in the country, and no one else is even a close second," he told the [Associated Press](#). "That's the reality. I'm disappointed and angry."

District City Administrator [Dan Tangherlini](#) declined to comment on how much Washington may receive. But he said city leaders shared the concern of officials in New York "that these funds may be spreading it too thinly, and not really recognizing that the threat frankly remains focused."

Last week's failed car bomb attacks in [London](#) and [Glasgow](#) show that the risk of a terrorist strike "remains substantial" in major cities and capitals, he said.

The suspects in the bomb plot "didn't branch out too far away from where we've seen terrorist acts before, at major cities and transportation targets," Tangherlini said. "We hope that Homeland Security recognizes that and that they'll focus our investments accordingly."

The \$746 million in urban grants are distributed based on risk and are used to pay for planning, emergency exercises, and big-ticket items such as communications equipment and emergency shelters. They make up the biggest of five Homeland Security programs that will provide \$1.7 billion this year for state and local counterterrorism efforts.

After the uproar over last year's grants, Homeland Security officials redesigned the program, reserving 55 percent of the funds, \$410 million, for the six top-priority areas: Washington, New York, [Los Angeles](#), Houston, [Chicago](#) and the [San Francisco Bay Area](#). The rest of the money is divided among 39 other metro areas.

The Washington area requested about \$140 million this year. David Marin, an aide to [Rep. Thomas M. Davis III \(R-Va.\)](#), said the region's congressional delegation had pushed Homeland Security to move away from "an inane per-capita formula toward one far more sensitive to actual risk of attack. That's the good news, and we expect a spike in finding as a result."

Department spokesman [Russ Knocke](#) said that even though areas such as New York and Washington are in the highest risk category and receive more money, there are limits.

"There are risks at varying degrees across the country," Knocke said. "While it is entirely likely that areas like New York, Washington and others are going to continue to be in the highest-risk tier for the foreseeable future, and as such will continue to receive a significantly higher percentage of the funding than other communities around the country, the program itself is not based on entitlement. It's driven by risk."

[Sen. Charles E. Schumer \(D-N.Y.\)](#) disputed the idea that the risks faced by the two cities are reflected in this year's grant totals.

"For an administration that professes not to waste money, they sure seem to enjoy wasting it on homeland security, and the top two cities in terms of threat -- which are New York and Washington -- get less than they deserve, and they give it to cities that have many fewer needs," he said.